

INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL

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COUNTRY Indochina/China

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SUBJECT Tran Van Tuyen

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. According to his dossier in the French Surete in Hong Kong, Tran Van Tuyen, at present a close associate of Bao Dai, was arrested by the French (in 1938 or 1939) and was imprisoned for one week. He was released in exchange for giving information concerning his associates in revolutionary activities, particularly Vo Nguyen Giap and other Communists. The French made him a mandarin as a reward for this betrayal.
2. Tuyen was a Stalinist sympathizer in the late 1930's and was a close friend of Vo Nguyen Giap, Tran Huy Lieu, and other Communists. He worked on the newspapers "Le Travail", "Le Peuple", and "Tin Tuc". He abandoned his Communist activities after his imprisonment and, as far as is known, did not join the Viet Minh. After March 9, 1945 Tran Trong Kim made Tuyen Governor of Nai-Duong Province.
3. Tuyen had associations with Nguyen Tuong Tam, head of the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, from 1937 on and they were both professors at the Ecole Thang Long. After the Viet Minh seizure of power in 1945, Tuyen immediately joined Tam's party. In 1946 he was one of the delegates of the Coalition Government of Viet Nam to the Dalat Conference. Afterwards, in exile in China, Tuyen was very critical of Vo Nguyen Giap's behavior at the Dalat Conference.
4. Tuyen, during the spring and summer of 1947, worked closely with Tam in Canton and Hong Kong. He was titular head of the largely imaginary "Youth Group" and was slated to become Minister of Youth if the National Union Front ever succeeded in forming a government. He was the principal liaison between Tam's group and Bao Dai. Bao Dai sent Tuyen, twice in 1947 and once in 1948, to Indochina to rally sentiment for Tam's group and for the ex-emperor. Tuyen, while in Indochina, was also in contact with other pro-Bao Dai groups (Hoach's, Xuan's, the Royalists of Annam, and groups in Tonkin). He observed the growing strength of the Cochinchinese group and did his best to avoid offending them. At the same time his companions, Phan Huy Dan and Dinh Xuan Quang, allied themselves directly with the Cochinchinese group.

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Tuyen discontinued living at Tam's Canton headquarters in early 1948 and installed himself in Hong Kong. He continued to associate somewhat with Tam's group but was more frequently with persons who depended more directly on Bao Dai. He goes frequently to the French Consulate. When Tam broke off negotiations with the French in the spring of 1948, Tuyen did not follow his example. He has received several invitations from the Xuan Government to return to Indochina and assume an important governmental post, but so far has not accepted.

As a special representative of Bao Dai Tuyen, upon returning from his various trips to Indochina, rendered detailed reports on the political situation to the ex-Emperor. Tuyen himself has privately stated that the French "captured" a number of these reports and that as a result of seeing their contents wished to imprison him. The French, however, permitted him to leave Indochina and it is possible that his story of the French "capturing" these reports was invented by him to explain the fact that they had access to the information in them and that, in fact, he was giving the reports directly to them.

Comment. Tuyen may become a political figure of some importance in the future. If the Xuan Government can demonstrate its strength, it seems likely that Tuyen will accept a position in it. If it fails and the French resort to an attempt to use a broader coalition (including Tam's group), Tuyen may be the important link as he is the only important person who has continued to maintain cordial relations with Tam and at the same time has been cooperating with the French.)

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